

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 AID-05 AGRE-00 OES-06 /095 W
-----012200 092623 /41

R 011425Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5071
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY LISBON

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, IS, PO
SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE-ISRAELI DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

REF: LISBON 1490

1. THE STATEMENT TO THE LABOR PARTY CONVENTION BY PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST PARTY LEADER SALGADO ZENHA THAT HIS COUNTRY WOULD SOON ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL WAS ENTHUSIASTICALLY RECEIVED BY THE CONVENTION AND WAS GIVEN WIDE PUBLICITY BY ISRAELI MEDIA. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY MFA OFFICIALS THAT IN A SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON, ZENHA WAS SOMEWHAT MORE RESTRAINED. HE TOLD ALLON THAT PORTUGAL DOES INTEND TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS BUT IS NOW PREOCCUPIED WITH ITS ECONOMIC CRISIS AND WITH ITS APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. HE DISCUSSED THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WHICH IS NOW BEFORE THE PORTUGUESE PARLIAMENT AND SAID THE THE FINAL DECISION WILL BE ONE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER AND NOT FOR THE PARLIAMENT.

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2. THE INDEPENDENT HAARETZ PUBLISHED THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE ON FEBRUARY 18 UNDER THE HEADLINE "SOARES: WE WILL ESTABLISH FULL RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL." BEGIN TEXT: PORTUGAL INTENDS TO ESTABLISH FULL RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL AND NO IMPORTANCE SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO THE DELAYS WHICH HAVE OCCURRED IN THIS PROCESS, THE PORTUGUESE RIME MINISTER,

MARIO SOARES, SAID IN REPLY TO THIS REPORTER'S QUESTION. THE ISSUE IS ON THE AGENDA OF THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT, WHICH WOULD SUBMIT IT TO PARLIAMANT FOR ITS DECISION. SOARES FURTHER STATED THAT ACTION WAS UNDER WAY THROUGH THE USUAL DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS FOR A NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

3. SOARES NOTED THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THIS SUBJECT WITH ISRAEL'S PRIME MINISTER IN GENEVA, ADDING: "WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER. IN AM UNABLE TO VISIT ISRAEL TO ATTENT THE LABOR PARTY CONVENTION DUE TO UNEXPECTED NEED FOR TALKS WITH THE HEADS OF THE NINE COMMON MARKET COUNTRIES. I HOPE TO COME TO ISRAEL FOR A VISIT NOT CONNECTED WITH THE CONVENTION". MR. SOARES WAS NOT ABLE TO SPELL OUT A DATE FOR THE ESTABLISHING OF REGULAR RELATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND PORTUGAL. END TEXT

4. IN A RELATED ITEM A GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE ANNOUNCEMENT ON FEBRUARY 20 STATED THAT FOLLOWING: "MR. REHAMIN TIMOR, DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION DIVISION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, LEFT FOR LISBON TODAY TO FINALIZE A PLAN FOR COOPERATION IN AGRICULTURAL MATTERS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF PORTUGAL. MR. YAAKOV SAGIV, DIRECTOR OF THE GUIDANCE AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES DIVISION OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, PARTICIPATED IN THE DISCUSSIONS WITH OFFICIALS OF THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT TOGETHER WITH MR. TIMOR. THE PORTUGUESE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, IT WILL BE RECALLED, VISITED ISRAEL LAST OCTOBER AND A JOINT STATEMENT WAS ISSUED AT THE CONCLUSION OF HIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VISIT ANNOUNCING COOPERATION IN AGRICULTURAL MATTERS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT HAS DISPLAYED INTEREST IN RECEIVING CONSELLING AND GUIDANCE FROM ISRAEL CONCERNING IRRIGATION SCHEMES, THE ORGANIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL TRAINING PROGRAMS AND OTHER ASPECTS OF AGRICULTURE."
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Message Attributes

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